

VZCZCXRO3957
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHDH RUEHKUK RUEHROV RUEHTRO
DE RUEHKH #0637/01 1340644
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 140644Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3774
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 KHARTOUM 000637

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SE GRATION, S/USSES, AF A/S CARSON, AF/E

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/10/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [SOCI](#) [KPKO](#) [KDEM](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: SPLM URGES SE GRATION TO WORK CPA AND DARFUR
CONCURRENTLY

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Alberto M. Fernandez, reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. Summary. Deputy Secretary General of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) for the Northern Sector Yasir Arman and Government of National Unity (GNU) Minister of Cabinet Affairs Kosti Manibe (SPLM) urged Special Envoy Gration to work concurrently on CPA implementation and Darfur. They noted that two are linked, and a breakdown of the North-South peace will not allow for a successful resolution to Darfur, they said. The SPLM leaders urged the SE to focus on Sudan's "big picture" problems and not fall victim to the National Congress Party's (NCP's) trap of diverting attention from larger problems to smaller, NCP-fabricated crises. They recommended that the USG continue to deeply engage the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) on a ceasefire in Darfur, but recommended that other stakeholders (the other Darfuri movements, civil society, and others) be brought into the negotiation process, and that discussions on a cease-fire be de-linked from negotiations on a political framework - otherwise the other movements, as well as Darfurians in general, will not accept the result. The SPLM representatives also advised the SE to address Darfur's underlying issue of conflict between the Government of Sudan (GoS) and the Government of Chad (GoC). They stated that until the Sudan-Chad problem is solved, it will not be possible to bring peace to Darfur. Finally, Arman and Manibe told the SE that relations between the NCP and the SPLM are "deteriorating" and asked for his assistance in moving CPA implementation, and in particular the southern Sudan Referendum law, forward. On behalf of the SPLM, the leaders agreed to work with SE Gration to devise a "CPA Joint Action Plan" that denotes items that need to occur and associated strategies for moving them forward. End Summary.

DEALING WITH THE NCP AND "BRINGING IN THE REGION"

¶2. (C) In a meeting with Special Envoy Gration on May 8, Deputy Secretary General of the SPLM for the Northern Sector Yasir Arman and GNU Minister of Cabinet Affairs Kosti Manibe (SPLM) thanked the SE for his efforts and told him that he has already done "a lot in a short time" to get movement on various issues. Arman noted that Sudan is a complex and diverse nation, with 570 different tribes and ethnic groups and more than 130 languages. Given Sudan's diversity, trying to solve it is like "trying to solve all of Africa," said Arman. "Your job requires a lot of work and patience," he continued. Arman stated that Sudan's largest issues are implementation of the CPA and resolution of Darfur, which are inter-related. There are only 20 months left during the interim period and the nearer we get to the southern Sudan referendum, the more intense the situation will become between the SPLM and the NCP. This needs a lot of focus, said Arman. If a crisis on the CPA occurs around the time of

the southern Sudan referendum, the volume and magnitude of the problem will be big, he said. We'd like to end Sudan's pattern of war - peace agreement - peace agreement dishonored - war, and the SPLM will be "in the business of helping you," said Arman. Arman also made the critical observation that "we need an agreement for what happens after the agreement," referring to the need for post-2011 arrangements so there is not a return to war. The eloquent Arman, who is also Chairman of the SPLM Caucus in the Parliament, echoed words that SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum had mentioned to the CDA just days prior - the NCP creates "tactical situations" that bring people away from solving Sudan's real problems (septel). "This requires that you always have the bigger picture" in mind, said Arman. He urged the SE to put the CPA at the "heart" of all the USG's discussions with the NCP.

13. (C) Minister Manibe told the SE to expect a lot of "ups and downs" when dealing with the NCP. He advised the SE to deal with the regime based on their actions, not their words. "Their words often mean nothing; judge them by their actions as a rule of thumb," he suggested. "The NCP doesn't respond to niceties," added Arman. When dealing with them you must always have a room full of carrots and a room full of sticks. It is then up to them to choose which room to enter. The SPLM can help you by also putting pressure on them, said Arman. Arman suggested that the SPLM and the USG coordinate their actions, particularly when dealing with the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) countries. These countries, in particular Kenya, Uganda, Eritrea, and Ethiopia, know Sudan and can be of value to you, said Arman. The IGAD countries have not been focused on Sudan since the signing of the CPA; we need to "bring the

KHARTOUM 00000637 002 OF 004

region back in again," he said.

DOHA: CONTINUE ENGAGING JEM, BUT BRING OTHER GROUPS IN

14. (C) Arman, whose SPLM portfolio includes Darfur and who has participated in the Doha process, shared some observations with SE Gration on Darfur "The Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) wants to be like the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) - the sole representative for Darfur." This will not work, said Arman, mainly because JEM is largely a Zaghawa-based movement with Islamist roots, which represents only a small percentage of the population of Darfur. Other actors must be brought into the process, he continued. Arman recommended that negotiations on a JEM-Government of Sudan (GoS) cease-fire be de-linked from negotiations on a broader political framework. Arman speculated that the GoS will follow through with releasing JEM prisoners, except for Osher Ibrahim (JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim's half-brother) and two other prominent JEM figures. This will be a "big issue" because Khalil is most concerned with the release of his brother, said Arman. Arman also emphasized that until the underlying problem of GoS-Chad hostility is addressed, it will not be easy for Doha to succeed. "The NCP wants to see (Chadian President) Deby exit, then Darfur will be easy for them" - JEM's strength will wane, the border can be patrolled, and the only remaining problem would be the IDPs. Right now JEM and the NCP are waiting to see what happens in Chad before moving forward seriously in Doha. If Deby is overthrown, the dynamics in Darfur will be completely different for both parties, said Arman. If Deby holds his ground, it will create another situation for JEM to put pressure on the NCP, he continued. Minister Manibe added that the "problem of ambitions" between the GoS and the GoC must be solved before there can be peace in Darfur. In order to resolve this, you will have to bring other actors on board, including Eritrea and Libya, said Manibe. Arman agreed and added that Libyan President Qaddafi must be brought into the process. Libya is very important to the problem of Darfur. Qaddafi has an interest in playing a "high profile role" in resolving Darfur as the leader of a neighboring nation and Chairman of the African Union (AU).

15. (C) Both Arman and Manibe told SE Gration that although they see JEM and the NCP as "the same breed" (hardline Islamist groups that do not have popular support among the people), it is absolutely necessary that the USG engage JEM on a Darfur solution. "Although JEM is no different from the NCP, you can't leave anyone out," said Manibe. The Minister suggested that as the USG engages with JEM, it simultaneously try to change JEM's focus. "JEM is part of the situation, and whether we like them or not, we have to deal with them," said Arman. JEM is currently the only formidable military force in Darfur, and it has strong ties to Deby that allow it to put pressure on this regime, he said. JEM's attack on Omdurman last May gave the movement a name and a trademark. As a result, they are successfully recruiting and becoming stronger. They have also developed a smart political cadre. "If the GoS fails in Ndjamena now, JEM will be back (to Khartoum)," speculated Arman. Arman and Manibe recommended that SE Gration continue to deeply engage with JEM regarding a Darfur solution, but balance it by bringing others into the process, particularly on the political solution.

16. (C) SE Gration asked the SPLM leaders what could be done to bring Sudan Liberation Army's (SLA) Abdel Wahid into negotiations. Arman explained that Abdel Wahid's problem is that he has false information about the international community and its support for him. "The worst part is that he's not engaging at all," said Arman. He shunned the SPLM, Fur tribal leaders and leaders from Qatar and Saudi Arabia. He has become the "hero of 'no'." Arman recommended that the USG send a clear message to Abdel Wahid that he must engage in peace talks. "His people are starting to realize his problematic approach of disengagement. He plays on the issue of ethnicity and since there is no other leader from the Fur who is emerging, he remains the Fur's main representative," said Arman. Manibe speculated that if Abdel Wahid were to return to Sudan today, he would not have near the appeal that he has had sitting in Paris. "His being away saves him" and he is able to hold onto this "aura of an expected savior" for the masses in the IDP camps and among the Fur. He is totally out of touch with reality, said Manibe. On the other hand, Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) leader Minni Minnawi's power waxes when he re-enters the field. He has been discredited by the C and his value cannot be seen or felt in Khartoum, but it comes to life in Darfur. "If he were to take up arms

KHARTOUM 00000637 003 OF 004

again, he could be the most important (rebel leader) among them," said Arman. "Minnawi is a Zaghawa, but not an Islamist, which allows him to reach out to other tribes. He can bring the SLM factions together. If he were to get support from Chad and/or Libya, his military strength would greatly improve," explained Arman, which is why the NCP weakens him politically but doesn't want him to go back to war.

17. (C) Minister Manibe told SE Gration that without the various rebel groups in Darfur agreeing to a common platform, a peace agreement will not be achieved. The SPLM continues to try and pull the groups together in order for them to agree upon a common set of objectives. It is to the NCP's benefit to have many factions on the ground with differing objectives, said Manibe. This fits into its "divide and conquer" strategy. "The NCP agrees with us on a conceptual level that the movements should adopt a consolidated approach, but behind closed doors, they know that dividing the groups is a very good military strategy." Manibe warned that if implementation of the CPA doesn't move forward, Darfur could "unravel." If you push the CPA to succeed, this will allow for Darfur to also succeed, he continued.

DEVISING A "CPA JOINT ACTION PLAN"

18. (C) Arman told the SE that the NCP is "nervous" when it comes to the CPA. The NCP expected the SPLM to fall apart after the death of John Garang, but it didn't. Furthermore, he claimed, the NCP politically-designed the census in order

to get the result it wanted. Now the NCP wants to speed up the elections in order to manipulate them, said Arman. The NCP thinks that if it can win two-thirds of the seats in the Parliament and across Sudan, it will win legitimacy in the eyes of the Sudanese and the outside world. An elections win will make the NCP more and more intransigent as we get closer to the 2011 Referendum, he said. The NCP doesn't know what to do with the end of the CPA. Although it says so publicly, it is not ready for the South to go. The CPA is a mechanism of transformation for the SPLM, but for the NCP it is a mechanism for retaining the status quo. "The relationship between the SPLM and the NCP is deteriorating," said Arman. "I am a northerner, and unity isn't even attractive to me," he added. Arman suggested that the SE meet with GNU President Bashir and tell him that the USG supports unity in Sudan, but that the NCP needs to make it appealing in order for it to be achieved. It is important for you to meet with Bashir because "you make peace with your enemies, not your friends," Arman said.

¶9. (C) Minister Manibe recommended that the SE continue to make an effort to try and advance CPA implementation and keep things moving "smoothly" between the parties, but also work with the parties on discussing what lies beyond 2011. Arman recommended that the USG first absorb the SPLM's view of how to move forward on the CPA and post-2011, then the NCP's view. You will need to stress to the NCP the importance of reaching agreement on the southern Sudan Referendum Law and the need to de-link it from a discussion on post-2011 arrangements, Arman suggested. SE Gration and the SPLM leaders agreed to jointly compile a CPA Joint Action Plan that lists the remaining CPA items that need to be implemented, coupled with the best way to push things forward. (Note: Post will work with Arman and Manibe on this plan in the coming week. End note.)

COMMENT

- - - -
¶10. (C) Arman and Manibe are two well-seasoned SPLM leaders who know how to do business in the North, particularly when it comes to dealing with the NCP's lack of an appetite for real progress on the CPA. Arman, as the most senior SPLM figure in the NCP-dominated Parliament, and Manibe, as a minister in the GNU, have extensive experience in dealing with the NCP's tactics. Their advice to SE Gration that he not lose sight of the "big picture" issues in Sudan is critical, as the NCP will do all that it can to constantly distract the U.S. and the rest of the international community from making substantial progress on the issues that matter. With only 20 months left until the 2011 Referendum, time is of the essence. Arman's advice to negotiate urgently "the agreement for after the agreement" (post-2011 arrangements) is critical and if developed soon will remove any pretense from the NCP not to allow the referendum law to move forward. The SPLM leaders also provided important insights on Darfur, which is an issue that the SPLM has been engaged on (Arman

KHARTOUM 00000637 004 OF 004

more than most), but has not been able to succeed in moving forward. If Darfur is going to be solved, GoS-GoC issues have to be addressed. A more inclusive process in Doha is the best way of reaching a comprehensive, durable peace deal and other players (tribal leaders especially) should be brought into the picture sooner rather than later to provide their input on a political solution. End Comment.

¶11. (U) SE Gration cleared this cable prior to transmission. FERNANDEZ